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LARGE NUMBERS OF BIRDS KILLED BY ELECTRIC POWER LINE

The harbour at Port Sudan receives its water from wells 25 km away to the northwest at Khor Arba'at. The pumps at the wells are electric and are connected to an overhead power line for which, over the last 10 km, metal poles are used. During my first visit at the beginning of September 1982, a few long-dead vultures (four Lappet-faced *Torgos tracheliotus* and several Egyptian *Neophron percnopterus*) were noticed near these poles. Three weeks later, on 2 October, this power line had killed a surprisingly large number of additional birds: three Kestrels *Falco tinnunculus*, at least 50 more Egyptian Vultures (about one under each pole) and a Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*. All of them had been electrocuted by touching the wires while they perched on the poles.

When I visited the place again in March 1983 only three new dead birds were found - two Egyptian Vultures and a single Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*.

The large number of Egyptian Vultures killed in September 1982 could be evidence that the birds were migrants, not familiar with these power poles, which had arrived possibly from the Palaearctic. The disappearance of Egyptian Vultures from around Khartoum during the last 20 years could be explained by this phenomenon.

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